

[REDACTED]  
From: [REDACTED]  
Sent: Saturday, February 05, 2011 12:25 PM  
To: Hoover, William J., [REDACTED]  
Subject: FW: Need quick guidance [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Are/Have we sent some kind of guidance to the Field along these lines?

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From: [REDACTED] (SMO)  
To: Hoover, William J., [REDACTED]  
Cc: [REDACTED] (SMO); [REDACTED] (SMO); [REDACTED] (OLA); [REDACTED] (CRM); [REDACTED] (USAAZ)  
Sent: Thu Feb 03 18:44:26 2011  
Subject: FW: Need quick guidance [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

I'd recommend something along these lines if agents ask for guidance about how to respond to contacts from Senator's Grassley's staff -

During the last week in January, Senator Grassley wrote to ATF, reporting allegations that ATF had sanctioned the sale of assault weapons to suspected straw purchasers and that these weapons were used in the killing of Customs and Border Protection Agent Brian Terry. The Department has sent a written response to Senator Grassley, advising him that these allegations are not true. In further response to his requests, we expect to schedule a briefing by appropriate ATF representatives with staff for Senator Grassley and other Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee in the near future about Project Gunrunner and ATF's effort to work with its law enforcement partners to build cases that will disrupt and dismantle criminal organizations.

As always, you are in no way obligated to respond to congressional contacts or requests for information and generally, consistent with ATF policy, you should refer congressional staff who seek information from you to ATF's office of congressional affairs. You are not authorized to disclose non-public information about law enforcement matters outside of ATF or the Department of Justice to anyone, including congressional staff. This is important to protect the independence and effectiveness of our law enforcement efforts as well as the privacy and due process interests of individuals who are involved in these investigations.

If you have information about waste, fraud, or abuse within ATF - or any actions by Department employees that you believe constitute professional misconduct, you are encouraged to report that information to your supervisors and/or the Department's Office of Inspector General.

[REDACTED]

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**From:** Hoover, William J.  
**Sent:** Monday, January 31, 2011 11:44 AM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** FW: Contact from Sen. Grassley's Office

FYI!

Billy

William J. Hoover  
Deputy Director  
Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms & Explosives  
O) 202-648-[REDACTED]

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**From:** Hoover, William J.  
**Sent:** Monday, January 31, 2011 11:20 AM  
**To:** [REDACTED] (ODAG) (SMO)  
**Cc:** Nelson, Kenneth E. [REDACTED] (ODAG) (SMO); [REDACTED]  
(OAG)  
**Subject:** FW: Contact from Sen. Grassley's Office

[REDACTED]

We received a letter last week from Senator Grassley. It appears one of our special agents contacted the Senator's staff and made comments to them [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] We have convened a meeting this afternoon with our Chief Counsel, Field Operations, and the Office of Professional Responsibility and Security Operations.

We understand the law concerning the Whistle Blower Protection Act (WPA) and will act in accordance. However, we also have to ensure we follow the guidelines of the Federal Rules of Criminal Procedure (FRCP) as well. We want to ensure we are doing the right thing. As you will see in the email below, our special agent has contacted the Senator's Staff and raised concerns over our inquiry. Apparently the Senator is meeting with the Attorney General [REDACTED]

I just spoke with [REDACTED] on another issue and informed him of this issue. You will note that I have cc'd him as well.

I will reach out to you shortly to follow up.

~~Billy~~

William J. Hoover  
Deputy Director  
Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms & Explosives  
O) 202-648-[REDACTED]

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, January 31, 2011 10:52 AM  
**To:** Hoover, William J.  
**Subject:** Contact from Sen. Grassley's Office

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] reported that he had been contacted this morning by Sen. Grassley's Chief Counsel for investigations who related the following:

Our employee who came in to speak with them advised that he/she had advised his/her chain of command that he/she was coming in to speak to Sen. Grassley's staff as required by orders. Upon return, the employee was "called to the carpet," caused to participate in two meetings, was accused of lying in the first meeting, and was ordered to write a memorandum disclosing everything that he/she had told the Senator's staff.

Sen. Grassley's counsel expressed concern that this may be a direct violation of the Whistleblower statute (retaliation) and that this could be perceived as an attempt to obstruct a congressional investigation. Sen. Grassley's counsel indicated that the Senator was having a private lunch with the Attorney General today and this would be the first topic on his agenda when they meet.

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
Office of the Director

O: 202-[REDACTED]

C: 786-[REDACTED]

HQ Room [REDACTED]